

S.D. House Defeats Amendment On Taxes

PIERRE (AP) — The South Dakota House has defeated a proposed constitutional amendment that would require a two-thirds vote to pass any ballot measure imposing a new tax or increasing an existing one. Representatives defeated the bill by a 35-34 vote Tuesday and resisted an attempt to reconsider its passage later in the day.

A two-thirds vote is already required in the Legislature to pass a new tax or increase the rate of an existing tax. But ballot measures imposing or increasing a tax can now be passed with only a simple majority in a statewide vote.

The proposed amendment would require a two-thirds vote on any ballot issue that creates or increases a tax. It also would clarify that if a tax is expiring, a two-thirds vote is needed to extend it.

S.D. Senate Approves Extra \$6M For Schools

PIERRE (AP) — The South Dakota Senate has approved a measure that would spend more than \$6 million to provide a one-time boost in state aid to school districts and technical schools.

Senators voted unanimously to pass the bill, which now goes to the House for its consideration.

Gov. Dennis Daugaard has recommended a 3 percent ongoing increase in state aid to school districts and funding for South Dakota's four technical institutes. The bill passed by the Senate would spend \$5.8 million to give school districts an extra 1 percent increase in aid.

The measure also would give the four technical schools an extra \$200,000.

Most of the debate centered on a part of the bill that would give \$250,000 to Teach for America, a program that supplies young teachers for reservation schools.

Ambulance Driver Falls Asleep, Crashes

PIEDMONT (AP) — Authorities say an EMT who was tending to patients was injured when an ambulance driver fell asleep and crashed into an abandoned pickup truck on Interstate 90 in South Dakota.

The Highway Patrol says the accident happened about 5 a.m. Tuesday near the Piedmont exit on I-90. The EMT was ejected from the vehicle. Authorities say she was transported to the Rapid City hospital with severe, non-life threatening injuries.

Three other people were transported to the hospital with minor injuries.

Authorities say the ambulance was transporting patients from Eagle Butte to the Rapid City hospital.

OBITUARIES

Johanna Pudwill

Funeral services for Johanna Pudwill, 106, of Avon are 10:30 a.m., Friday, March 8, 2013 at the First Baptist Church in Avon. Burial is in the Baptist Cemetery, rural Avon.

Visitation is Thursday from 4-6 p.m. at the church.

Crosby-Jaeger Funeral Chapel in Avon is in charge of arrangements.

Johanna Pudwill was born September 6, 1906 in rural Avon, South Dakota, the daughter of Andrea and Lydia (Hinzman) Pudwill. She died Monday, March 4, 2013 at the Good Samaritan Society in Tyndall. Johanna attained the age of 106 years, five months and 26 days.

Johanna attended a country school north of Avon. She then worked on a farm doing housework near Mitchell for several years. She moved to Portland, OR in 1941. She worked for Sears in Portland for many years, retiring in 1972. She moved back to Avon in 1991 and lived in the Meadowview Manor. Johanna entered the Good Samaritan Society in Tyndall in 2005.

Johanna was faithful to her Lord and was a member of the First Baptist Church in Avon and the Women's Missionary Fellowship.

Johanna will be remembered for her love of crocheting and was a great seamstress. She also loved to travel and take pictures. She took a special interest in her nieces and nephews and sent them birthday cards every year.

Thankful for having shared her life are two sisters-in-law: Harriet Pudwill of Yankton and Dorothy Pudwill of Avon; many nieces, nephews and great nieces and nephews.

Johanna was preceded in death by her parents; five brothers: Ewald; Elmer; Allan and two who died in infancy; and three sisters: Rose Conklin; Alma Hoff; and Luella Voigt.

Yankton Press & Dakotan
March 6, 2013

Joseph Thaler

LAKE ANDES — Joseph Gene Thaler, 83, died on March 4, 2013 at Select Specialty Hospital, Omaha, Neb.

Funeral service will be at 10:30 a.m. Friday, March 8, at First Lutheran Church, Lake Andes, with burial following in Pleasant Ridge Cemetery in Armour.

Visitation is 7-9 p.m. Thursday at Koehn Bros. Funeral Home, Lake Andes.

Glendae Anderson

Glendae Florence Block Anderson, 84, of Vermillion, SD passed away Monday, March 4, 2013 at the Sanford Vermillion Hospital.

Glendae Block was born September 11, 1928 in Colome, SD to Glenn and Hilda (Koester) Block.

She graduated from Yankton High School, and married Wallace Anderson on June 4, 1946 in Portland, OR.

She is survived by her Three daughters; Gloria (Dan) Christopherson of Vermillion, Nancy (Gregory) Pickering of Dallas, TX and Peggy (Frank) Moore of Stockton, CA, six grandchildren and five great grandchildren.

Funeral service will be 10:30 a.m. Friday, March 8, at the Trinity Lutheran Church in Vermillion, with burial to follow the luncheon at the Garden of Memories in Yankton, SD. Visitation will begin at 5 p.m. Thursday March 7, with a prayer service at 7 p.m. all at the church. Memorials may be directed to the Trinity Lutheran Church Board of Property Fund or the Vermillion Food Pantry.

Yankton Press & Dakotan
March 6, 2013

Dorothy Darcy

Dorothy Ann Darcy, 81, of Yankton died Monday, March 4, 2013, at the Avera Yankton Care Center, Yankton.

Private family memorial services will be held with the Rev. Mark Lichter officiating. Burial of the cremated remains will be in the Sacred Heart Cemetery, Yankton, at a later date.

The Opsahl-Kostel Funeral Home & Crematory, Yankton, is assisting with service details.

Vesta Hanson

Vesta M. Hanson, 99, of Viborg died Tuesday, March 5, 2013, at Pioneer Memorial Hospital, Viborg.

Arrangements are pending with the Hansen Funeral Home, Irene.

Edward Young

Edward D. Young, 81, of Wakonda died Tuesday, March 5, 2013, at Heritage Manor, Wakonda.

Arrangements are pending with the Hansen Funeral Home, Irene.

South Dakota

Lawmakers Cautious About State Revenue

BY CHET BROKAW

Associated Press

PIERRE — Lawmakers putting together South Dakota's next state budget decided Tuesday to take a conservative approach in estimating state revenues for next year, citing uncertainty over federal budget cuts and the possibility of a continuing drought.

Senate Appropriations Chair Deb Peters, R-Hartford, said South Dakotans may limit their spending because of uncertainty caused by the failure of President Barack Obama and Congress to reach agreement on federal budget cuts. That in turn could limit growth in the sales tax, the state's largest general tax source, she said.

"People don't spend. That's part of the reason we went conservative with some of the revenue numbers," Peters said.

The Joint Appropriations Committee decided tax collections and other ongoing revenue

will be about \$1.32 billion for the budget year that starts July 1, nearly the same as Gov. Dennis Daugaard predicted when he issued his budget proposal in December. Ongoing revenue for next year would be up about \$58 million from the revenue expected for the current year, according to the committee's estimates.

The committee will use the revenue projections as a guide to how much money can be spent in next year's budget. The panel plans to begin putting the finishing touches on the spending plan Wednesday so the House and Senate can pass the next budget by Friday, the end of the main run of this year's legislative session.

Daugaard has proposed a \$4.1 billion budget, with more than \$1.3 billion coming from state general tax revenues.

The Republican governor's budget proposal also left about \$26 million unallocated, giving the Legislature a chance to decide how to spend that money. Peters said Tuesday that un-

allocated money now has grown to about \$32 million.

Lawmakers are considering spending that unallocated money on scholarship programs and plans to boost state aid to school districts.

The committee's revenue estimates are based on reports submitted last week by the governor's budget office and the Legislature's staff. The economists' projections varied by only a few million dollars, a small amount compared with the \$1.3 billion general fund budget.

South Dakota's budget is particularly dependent on the state sales tax, which provides about 60 percent of general state revenue. Sales tax collections are expected to grow to \$805.5 million next year, up about 4 percent from this year.

Sen. Larry Tidemann, R-Brookings, said he is worried about revenue coming from the agricultural sector because a second year of drought could hurt farm and ranch income.

Neb. Lawmaker Floats Idea: Taxes As An Investment

BY GRANT SCHULTE

Associated Press

LINCOLN, Neb. — A Nebraska lawmaker floated an unconventional idea Tuesday for the state tax system: Let taxpayers become investors.

Sen. Paul Schumacher, of Columbus, presented a bill that would give Nebraskans the option pay more taxes up-front, in exchange for an inflation-adjusted credit that they could use to lower their future tax liability.

Schumacher said the measure serves a double purpose: It would generate more up-front cash for roads projects, which are cheaper now than in the fu-

ture, and would give savers a new place to stick their money.

"It basically allows the taxpayers to invest in Nebraska," he said.

Schumacher said the bill is aimed at residents who aren't satisfied with low-interest savings accounts, the stock market, or farmland. Residents who pay taxes beyond what they owe could apply that amount to future tax debts, with a credit adjusted for inflation and the same interest as a 10-year Treasury bill.

Taxpayers would have to wait five years to claim the credit, unless they were 62 or older. The credit would be nonrefundable,

meaning a taxpayer's liability would never drop below zero. It also would impose a 10 percent "transfer fee" for anyone who claims the credit early, such as someone who moves out-of-state.

For taxpayers who die, the state would use the credit to pay down inheritance taxes and other debts owed, impose a 10 percent fee, and transfer the rest of the credit to an heir.

Schumacher presented the bill to the Legislature's Revenue Committee, which reviews tax policy. The measure comes as lawmakers prepare for a broader review of Nebraska's tax structure, following criticism that the system is outdated and fails to

reflect the current state economy.

The bill's future is unclear, although several committee members credited Schumacher for his "out-of-the-box" thinking.

Schumacher acknowledged that his idea — "a self-dreamed-up, Sunday afternoon thing" — would amount to an experiment for the state. And he conceded that the program would come to "a screeching halt" once federal interest rates increase. But in the meantime, he said, the state could use it to build roads quickly, before interest rates and inflation drive up the project costs.

County

From Page 1

- There were reports that Jones' family was seen removing boxes from the Auditor's Office. Witnesses said they did not know what was being taken but admitted that Jones often took work home. Employees in the Auditor's Office said they were not aware of anything missing and hadn't seen anything taken out of the building.

- It was unclear if the Highway Department had received reimbursements to its Road and Bridge Fund for work it had done for townships. After reviewing the records, the DLA found that the \$50,796 in reimbursements for 2012 was less than previous years. However, former Highway Superintendent Alan Sorensen pointed out that the county is doing less work for townships than it had in previous years.

- Another area of concern was where the money from the sale of surplus goods was being placed. It was determined that, without direction from the County Commission, that money is placed in the General Fund and was put there.

- The cash flow situation of the county was a concern. Despite some unresolved variances in the 2012 budget, Olson said the county has the cash flow necessary for its 2013 budget.

- There were questions about obtaining training for Auditor's Office personnel and assistance with completing financial statements for the county. Olson specified some training opportunities and added that the DLA is available to offer guidance.

- The final area of concern was an instance in which the Auditor's Office had withheld a state income tax from an employee's payroll. Staff acknowledged that an error had occurred in the payroll accounting system where "South Carolina" was entered instead of "South Dakota." The issue has been

resolved, and the employee was reimbursed.

"We did not see anything in reviewing the situation ... that heightened our concern," Olson said after going through the report. "Certainly, when we were reviewing the situation, if we had come up with anything else, we would have also looked into that. We are going to continue to look."

He said if any concerns come up in the future, contact will be made with the County Commission.

Cooperation from all county staff so far has been excellent, he added.

Commissioner Allen Sinclair asked whether the \$2.3 million in reserves Jones had told the County Commission was carried over into 2013 was accurate. Typically, that figure is in the \$1.2 million to \$1.5 million range.

"We didn't expect that," Sinclair said.

Olson said that though those numbers were not yet audited, that figure did appear to be correct.

An explanation for the departure from the norm was that \$960,000 had been pegged for transfer to other accounts, mostly the Road and Bridge Fund, but had not been moved, according to Olson.

"The bottom line is, that \$2.3 million is there," Sinclair said. "It's just not in the same funds that it would normally be in."

Olson recommended that the exact details for budget supplements and transfers be documented in the minutes of commission meetings to assist state auditors in the future.

"Otherwise, when we get here to do the audit, we are trying to interpret what you guys intended to do," he said.

Commission Chairman Bruce Jensen said after the meeting that the report gives commissioners peace of mind as they move forward.

"We had to know exactly what was going on," Jensen said. "There were some minor things in the report, but we're going to correct them. Thank goodness, it turned

out well — better than I thought it was going to."

Jensen said the most common question he receives from the public wasn't addressed in the DLA report: When is the auditor coming back?

"I talked with Larry Jones, her husband, and she is not doing that well," Jensen stated. "Hopefully, she'll come out of it. She is still the auditor, and we'll respect that."

In the meantime, the auditor from Clay County comes to Yankton as needed and also assists Auditor's Office staff via phone, Jensen said.

Prior to Olson's departure, the commission approved a motion to have the DLA assist the county in completing a 2012 annual budget report that was supposed to be done by Tuesday's meeting.

In other business Tuesday, the commission:

- accepted "with regret" the resignation of Lois Eli, the deputy auditor. She has served in the office for 50 years and will retire April 30. The opening of a clerical position in the auditor's office will be advertised for a week so Eli can assist in the hiring and training of the new employee. The commission said the state's attorney is reviewing whether a new deputy auditor can be appointed in the absence of the auditor;
- was informed that property owners in the Turkey Valley Ditch Association had been improperly levied. The commission believes all the 2012 taxes will have to be

abated and the process started over next year. Residents there are trying to complete work on the drainage ditch;

- discussed continuing problems with the Deer Boulevard trail. Gustad said he spotted evidence that the subgrade of the trail is failing, in addition to other problems already chronicled with the project. The commission requested that the contractor, engineer and state Department of Transportation officials involved in the project be present for a discussion at the next meeting. The county is at risk of losing federal money for the project if it isn't completed soon;

- was told by Randy Golden that he no longer plans to build a greenhouse along Highway 52 just west of Yankton due to legal concerns;

- approved plans by the Planning and Zoning Office to move ahead with creating a comprehensive plan for the Highway 52 corridor. Public meetings are being scheduled to get input, including one at 7 p.m. March 21 at the Yankton County Government Center;

- approved three new members to the county Planning Commission;
- approved a volunteer sign-up program to commence in the Yankton County Emergency Management Office;
- approved a contract with Arens Engineering to proceed with services related to the old county highway shop site; and

- heard a summary of the Register of Deed's 2012 activity.



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